

Upper Merion Area High School
Upper Merion Area Athletic and Activities Department
Resocialization of Sports Recommendations (Summer Workouts)
Updated 7/12/2020

INTRODUCTION:

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control, among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families. The UMASD will consider all the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA DOH, as well as the NFHS and PIAA. The UMASD realizes the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. These recommendations will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for High School Athletics.

1. Athletes and Coaches will complete a “COVID- 19 Pre-Screening Form” prior to any workout or team meeting. The form will be turned in to the coach prior to the start of each workout or team meeting. This form is a requirement to participate in the workout or team meeting.
2. Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing (20 seconds with warm water and soap or hand sanitizer with an alcohol percentage of at least 60%) and employees wearing a cloth face covering as feasible. (Face coverings are recommended to help decrease potential exposure to COVID-19 respiratory droplets by an infected individual. Face Coverings will not be used for athletes while practicing or competing.) Hand Sanitizer will be available for team use as resources allow.
3. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities.
4. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible.
5. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols prior to in-person meetings/workouts.
6. Anyone who is sick must stay home.
8. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.
9. Athletes and Coaches MUST provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared.

CLASSIFICATION OF SPORTS

High Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants. Examples: football, wrestling, cheerleading (stunts).

Moderate Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants. Examples: basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, 7 on 7 football.

Low Risk: Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors. Examples: running events, cross country, swimming, golf, sideline cheer.

** High/Moderate Risk Sports may move to a Low risk category with non-contact modifications. Team Activities should be limited to individual skill development drills that maintain social distancing.

Levels of Participation

Level 1 (PA State Red) & Level 2 (PA State Yellow)

Team Activities: No in person team meetings or gatherings. Athletes and Coaches can meet via Google Meets. Athletes can participate in individual at home workouts prescribed by the coaches.

Level 3 (PA State Green)

Team Activities: All sports teams may hold workouts. Low risk sports will have no restriction but must follow hygiene and safety check protocols. Moderate risk sports may hold workouts with modifications. High risk sports may not participate in typical game-like workouts/drills that require close contact with another person. Examples: tackling another person in football. live or drill wrestling with a partner, organized stunts for cheerleaders.

Pre-workout Screenings:

- All coaches and students provide a signed "COVID-19 Pre-Screening Form" prior to a workout. No one may participate in a workout without a completed and signed form.
- Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19
- All players will be required to wash hands with hand sanitizer prior to the start of practice and at the end of practice.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- Full team practices at outside practice facilities are allowed, but coaches should consider limited participation of only necessary players.
- Indoor Practices are permitted at 50% capacity of the practice area.
 - Main Gym: 275 people at 50% capacity
 - Back Gym: 134 people at 50% capacity
 - Auxiliary Gym: 105 people at 50% capacity
 - Weight Room: **Closed**
 - Pool: 65 people at 50% capacity

- All doors must be opened for indoor practices to allow sufficient air flow.
- If teams are using the same outdoor practice area, there should be a 1-hour gap between start and end times to avoid congregation of teams and cleaning of restroom facilities.
- Only one team per day may use an indoor facility due to cleaning demands following a workout
- Locker Rooms will not be available.
- Only one set of bathrooms will be available for outside and inside. The restrooms in the stadium will be open for outdoor use. The restrooms in the lobby of the gym will be opened for teams practicing indoors. Please limit to no more than 2 people at a time in the bathrooms.
- Only team members and coaches are allowed in the practice area. No parents or other spectators.
- When not directly participating in practice activities players need to adhere to social distancing.

Permitted Types of Activities

- Low Risk sports can practice as normal
- Moderate Risk sports can practice with modifications
- Cohorting of players should still be implemented
- Conditioning activities should take into account many students have not been active since the closure.
- Teams should follow this guide to get their summer workouts started:
 - Week 1 (or sessions 1-4)
 - Training session not to exceed 90 minutes
 - Water breaks at least every 15 minutes
 - Introductory Conditioning
 - Sport specific drills and skill development
 - Week 2 (or session 5-8)
 - Training session not to exceed 120 minutes
 - Water breaks every at least every 20 minutes
 - Moderate Conditioning
 - Sport Specific drills, skill development, agility and plyometrics

Usage of Equipment

- No shared individual equipment such as gloves and sticks is allowed.
- Athletic equipment that must be shared: balls, blocking shields etc may be used by multiple individuals using the “Cohort Model”. The same equipment is used by the same cohort for the entirety of the practice.
- Equipment must be sanitized after each drill or activity and at the end of practice.
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow.
- The HS Weightroom will be shut down until further notice due to space and social distance requirements. When it reopens, weight cages will be used for all maximum lifts (bench press and squatting). Spotters should be at each end of the bar not directly over top of the head of the lifter.

Sanitation of Facilities

- Any high touch area should be sanitized after practice.
- No locker room access.
- Select bathrooms will be open for emergency use only.
- Cleaning schedules will be developed for indoor usage.

Individualized Hydration

- All players and coaches must bring their own filled water bottle.
- No sharing of water bottles will be permitted.

- There will be no available water fountains or water dispensing equipment provided.
- Players and athletes are encouraged to bring more water than they think they will need
- Students may not participate if they do not bring their own water source.

Face Coverings

- All coaches must wear face coverings during the entirety of the practice whether indoors or outdoors.
- Athletes must wear face coverings when entering and leaving the practice location.
- Athletes must wear face coverings when on sidelines, dugouts, etc. and anytime 6 feet of social distancing is not possible.
- Athletes do not have to wear face coverings when they are actively involved in workouts that prevent the wearing of face coverings.
- When indoors students must wear face coverings when not involved in athletic activities.

Travel To Other States

- Student or coaches traveling to states identified by the PA Department of Health as states with high amounts of Covid-19 may not participate in any team activity for 14 upon their return to Pennsylvania. The states identified are:
 - Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Utah.

Students Showing Symptoms During Activity:

- Any student showing symptoms related to COVID-19 will be immediately removed from participation in activities and moved to a location away from others.
- A coach will contact the parent to have the student immediately picked up.
- A doctor verification is needed for the student to return to voluntary workouts.